

U.S. Department of Labor

Office of the Assistant Secretary for
Veterans Employment and Training Service
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MEMO TO: South Dakota Veterans Commission

FROM: Sarah Bierman, Veterans' Program Specialist for U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

SUBJECT: U.S. Department of Labor, VETS Report

The mission of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) is to proudly serve Veterans and Service Members. We provide resources and expertise to assist and prepare them to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities, and protect their employment rights. This mission is met utilizing several different programs. These programs include the Jobs for Veterans State Grant, which funds the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists (DVOPs) and the Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) at the SD Department of Labor offices located throughout the state.

Another program utilized in VETS is the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) which is a 2 ½-day workshop plus DTAP (services offered to service members leaving the military with a service-connected disability) is conducted at Ellsworth Air Force Base for transitional service members.

We also assess complaints alleging violations of statutes requiring Veterans' Preference in federal hiring, and implement and collect information regarding Veteran employment by federal contractors. VETS is also responsible for seeking compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), codified at Title 38 U.S. Code Sections 4301 – 4335 and 20 C.F.R. Part 1002. We work very close with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to provide USERRA outreach, education, and awareness to our veterans, service members, and employers. VETS and ESGR work together to provide USERRA training to first-line supervisors, managers, and Human Resource managers across the state.

Assistant Secretary Raymond M. Jefferson for Veterans Employment and Training has five core aspirations that VETS will pursue during his tenure:

1. Provide Veterans and transitioning service members a voice in the workplace by serving as the national focal point for Veterans' employment and training needs.
 - a. Increasing awareness of our resources and making programs available.
 - b. Improving communication and outreach to partners and stakeholders.
 - c. Paying close attention to populations with unique needs.
2. Create a better path to good jobs for Veterans through increased outreach.

3. Assist service members transition seamlessly into meaningful employment.
4. Facilitate a return to work for service members and protect vulnerable populations by increasing awareness of and commitment to USERRA's rules that protect veterans and service members.
5. Invest in VETS team members through continuous training and improvement to better serve Veterans.

The Assistant Secretary also reports the goal of providing Department of Labor Secretary's vision of "*Good Jobs for Everyone*" and improving the four main programs at VETS:

- The Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG);
- The Transition Assistance Program Employment Workshops (TAP);
- The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP); and
- The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

In addition to improving current programs, VETS is working on new efforts to highlight the value of hiring Veterans to the private sector and making the Veterans hiring process more convenient and efficient by increasing engagement with employers.

VETS is also leading the effort to implement Executive Order 13518 *Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government*, which President Obama signed on November 9, 2009. The overall goal is to increase the number of Veterans in the Federal work force. Additionally, agencies are required to establish a Veterans Employment Program office, or designate an agency officer or employee with full time responsibility for its Veterans Employment Program. A new web site has been created www.fedshirevets.gov.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service and the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Job Corps are partnering in a demonstration project that will provide Job Corps' comprehensive array of career development services to eligible Veterans 20 to 24 years old to prepare them for successful careers. For more information on this Job Corps project, please visit <http://www.dol.gov/vets/jc-info.htm>.

Please visit the Veterans' Employment and Training Service's website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/> for other resources and information.

The South Dakota Department of Labor, Local Office will provide employment and unemployment rates.

Respectfully submitted
Sarah Bierman, Veterans' Program Specialist